



USAID | INDIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

ALLIANCES IN ACTION

E-Choupal Rural Health Initiative

Eighty Village Health Champions learn business skills and are provided training on key health so they can serve as community-based public health entrepreneurs



Development challenge: India's growing population of more than one billion strains resources and complicates disease prevention. Maternal and child mortality rates remain high with approximately 1.9 million children dying before their fifth birthday and 67,000 mothers dying each year because of pregnancy-related complications. Family planning choices are limited, with more than two-thirds of women opting for sterilization as their method for family planning while 30 million couples have an unmet need for contraception.

Business Challenge: According to the McKinsey Global Institute, health care will be one of the three largest markets in India by 2025. The majority of this growth will come from low income and rural markets. A sizeable number of non-health sector commercial players in these markets recognize that partnerships will be needed to consolidate their growth. This opportunity provides a fertile ground for forging partnerships for health among a variety of players.

Approach: USAID's Market-based Partnerships (MBP) for Health Project has partnered with ITC Limited to leverage its rural distribution and communication network, e-Choupal, to increase access to and build demand for health products

and services among rural populations. The primary goal of MBP's e-Choupal health model is to increase access to family planning, diarrhea management, water purification and menstrual hygiene products along with over the counter medicines and products in remote villages of Uttar Pradesh (UP). Under the e-Choupal umbrella, MBP has created a new channel – Village Health Champions (VHCs) – who promote and sell health products. VHCs supply rural communities with selected health products from private sector and pharmaceutical partners via ITC for a commission, and are provided intensive training on public health issues as well as business skills (entrepreneurial/sales skills, inventory management, etc.). VHCs also serve as community-based public health entrepreneurs, creating awareness of priority health issues and linking the community with key public sector health programs.

Partners: Abt. Associates
(USAID's implementing partner)
and ITC e-Choupal

Product partners: Pfizer, Vision
Spring, Royal Hygiene,
Medentech, JK Ansell, Ranbaxy